

65 The Woman Behind the Mask

Liam stood in the middle of the penthouse suite and slowly gazed over every single thing carefully arranged according to Amelie's delicate vision. 1

Every little detail reminded him of her and it was a painful thing to accept -- soon, this would all turn into nothing but a fleeting memory.

This hotel room had been Liam's temporary home for more than a month and strangely enough, it was the only place he felt comfortable at in many years. And he knew that it was all thanks to Amelie.

The first time he met her was at the alumni event at the university one year ago.

Liam was on his way to see one of his professors -- or rather beg him to look over his lengthy absence at his lectures and allow him to take the final exam anyway -- when he noticed him talking to a woman he had never seen before.

Rather short and slender, with her long fair hair falling down her back in neatly styled waves;

there was nothing fake in her features; she wore almost no makeup and barely had any jewelry to compliment her simple designer dress. It was a refreshing simplicity.

She was a woman of exceptional yet reserved beauty. Her entire being exuded somewhat cold elegance which he found intriguing and even a little intimidating. For a moment, Liam felt as if the entire hall turned empty and she was the only one he could see. He felt his heart skip a beat.

He never knew it was possible outside the weird cliché movies or tear-jerking romance novels, and yet it still happened to him too -- love at first sight. To Liam, she looked truly special. She was really one of a kind.

She disappeared just as suddenly as she appeared but Liam couldn't get her out of his head for weeks, and after a while, it turned into a complete obsession.

He couldn't understand why he was doing all of that -- looking up articles about her in old and new magazines; reading about her in blogs and gossip media; looking up candid photos of her



early to disturb her with a call," he whispered, regretting to having booked a flight at such an inconvenient hour.

His fingers began to type a message as if that was something natural to them and before he knew it, he pressed "send", a bitter smile gracing his pale lips.

Now it was he who would need to disappear as suddenly as he appeared.

"Mr. Bennett, I have checked everything, we are ready to leave."

Austin placed a big leather bag on top of a suitcase and nodded at the bellboys, instructing them to take care of the luggage. Liam sighed and followed his assistant out.

Waiting for the elevator, Liam couldn't help but glance at Amelie's door one last time. He wondered if she was having nice dreams; he hoped she didn't drink before going to bed.

His thoughts were diverted back to the elevator as the doors in front of them slid open and once Austin pressed the button to go down, Liam felt his heart sink.



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'Wait for me, Miss Ashford. I'll be back soon and this time, I will be able to do more.' 3

Amelie rested her chin on top of her knees, pulling her legs closer to her chest. The night summer air felt refreshing and she was glad she decided to spend some time on the balcony before finally going back to sleep.

It was already late but her mind refused to calm down; she kept thinking about what happened in her office the other day while Liam's words repeatedly echoed in her ears.

'He was jealous... I thought this was only possible in movies or romance novels. He was so jealous that he got angry; so jealous that he didn't mind hurting someone else or getting hurt himself.'

Amelie felt torn between two contradicting emotions. On one hand, she felt incredibly bad for causing a feud between two people and even making them get hurt. On the other hand... She couldn't help but feel a little flattered.

'For the first time in my life, someone got truly jealous because of me... So this is what it feels

like.'

With a long exhale, she looked at her phone to check the time.

"Four in the morning... I have to be at the office in four hours, I should really get some sleep."

Entering the room, Amelie's eyes noticed a flickering light emanating from the flashlight slot at the back of the old phone given to her by Liam.

An unread message.

Somewhat excited, she quickly opened the message but her hands began to tremble the more her eyes moved over each word written in the pixelated letters on the small screen.

Dropping the phone on the bed, Amelie dashed out of her room and ran toward Liam's suite, knocking unexpectedly loudly on his door.

"Mr. Bennett, are you still there? I only saw your message now! Mr. Bennett?"

No matter how many times she called out his name, there was no response.



She couldn't understand what she was doing anymore; at that moment, her head --or maybe her heart-- was making all the decisions on her behalf. Amelie rushed back to her room and retrieved a master key from one of the desk drawers. 1

Her feet took her back to Liam's room and once she opened the door, she froze, and her eyes went blurry with a thin film of tears. 1

Liam was already gone.

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